

302
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 764



A



B



C



D



E

PLATE 23. *The Pukamuni Rituals*
 A, Pulanimbuwi decorated for Burial Rituals; B, Pulanimbuwi mourning; C, Rite of Wandiatapinda; D, Final Scene at Grave; E, Pulanimbuwi being washed.

[p.44 b]

Z: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OIZO Tiwi OIZO

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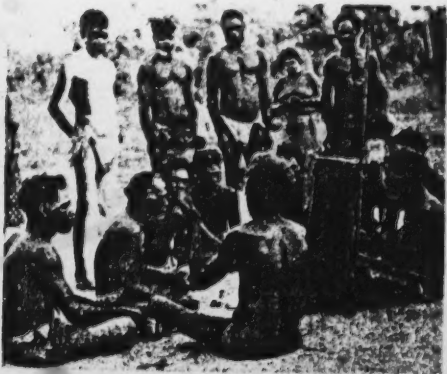
D

PLATE 34. *The Pukamuni Rituals*
A, Feeding Pukamuni Man; a, Rite of Wandiatapinda; c, The Grave; d, Belongings
of Dead Man, Wanlamperi.

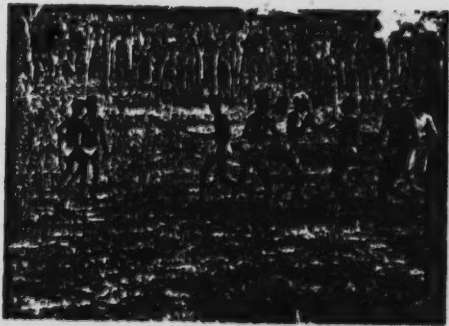
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2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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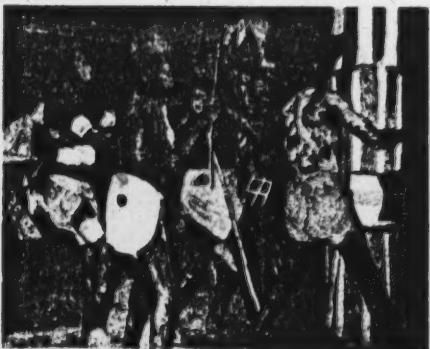
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PLATE 35. *The Pukamuni Rituals*
 A, Young Girls and Men Dancing; B, Feeding Pukamuni Workers; C, Women and Boys Dancing; D, Ceremonial Fight at Ilanis.

CP 72 B J

2: Moundford E-5 (1954) 1958
 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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PLATE 27. *The Final Pukamuni Rituals*
 A, Chief Woman Mourner; B, Scene at Burial Poles; C, Mourning at Burial Poles;
 D, Presentation of Gifts.

[p. 720]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958

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D

PLATE 38. Carved and Painted Burial Poles

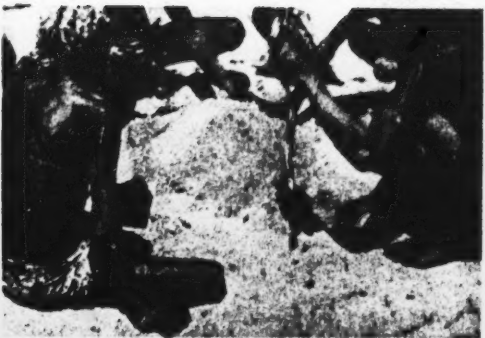
A, B, C, Carved and Painted Pole on Old Grave; D, Poles on Old Grave.

[p. 120 F]

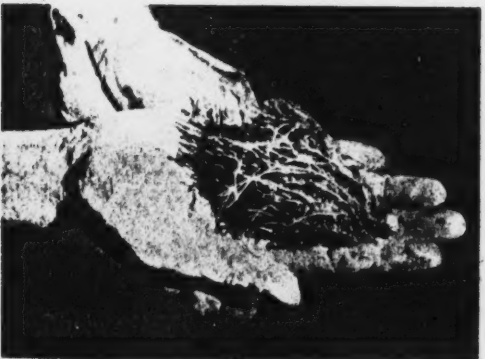
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B



D



A



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PLATE 44. *The Kulama Ceremony*
 A, Chanting Kulama Songs; B, Placing Kulama Yams in Oven; C, Ritual before
 collecting Kulama Yam; D, The Kulama Yam.

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[p.128 B]

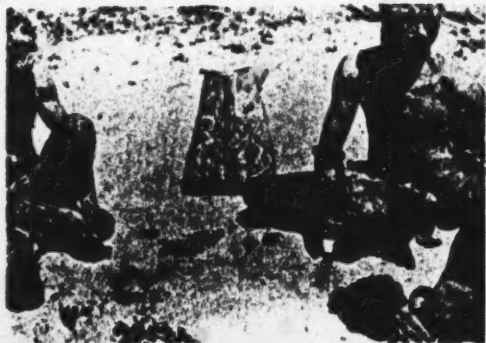
2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
 OI20 Tiwi OI20



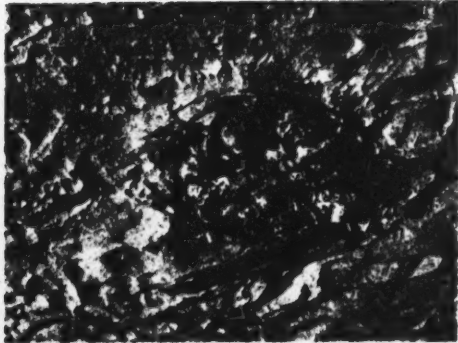
A



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PLATE 45. *The Kulama Ceremony*
 A, Building the Kulama Fire; B, Placing the Kulama Yams in Water; C, Pressing
 Heated Sand against Joints; D, Deserted Kulama Oven.

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[p.144 A]

- 304 In a few instances, a horizontal row of small circular scars was noticed beneath the cicatrices of the chest, extending from the axillar to the sternal-line, on one half of the body only. They appeared to have been burned into the skin by the heated end of a fire-stick¹ (vide Fig. 2, A).

Circumcision not practised.

- 304 Circumcision is not, as elsewhere in Australia, one of the attendant mutilations during the ceremonies of initiation, at the age of puberty. No cases were noted either on Bathurst or Melville Island. In this respect the Islanders resemble the fast disappearing Larrekiyas of the Port Darwin district and certain other tribes of Cape York and the adjoining islands.²

- 302 The pubic hairs are removed by "pulling them out" with the hand in the same way as the upper lip is cleared of its growth. While standing in conversation, the natives have acquired a peculiar habit of pushing the penis back between the thighs and keeping it from view by crossing one leg over the other.

Habitations.

- 342 The islanders build no permanent huts or structures to live under. Apart from the shelters afforded by local or natural conditions, such as overhanging trees, the only form of artificial shelter noticed was prepared from the bark of a tree. A long sheet is cut from the trunk and doubled crosswise at its centre. The two ends are then stuck into the ground at an angle of say forty-five degrees. Similar shelters are found on the north coast and elsewhere on the mainland. In the absence of any more permanent structures, the islanders are, in this respect, not so far advanced as the continental Australian aboriginal. Camp fires are, as usual, much in evidence and kept alight during the whole of the night. Fire-sticks are carried during the day time. Sticks and dry timber, collected to feed the fires, are broken to the required length, not across the knee but over the crown of the head.
- [101] 372 Small sheets of paper bark (*Melaleuca* sp.) are used as mats to lie on when sleeping or camping.

Personal Wear.

- 291 Both male and female walk about in the nude state. The body is anointed with grease and beameared, in one or more shades of colour, with ochre. The females carry folded sheets of paper bark or large food-carriers about with them, which, upon the approach of strangers, they hold in front of their person.

- [71] It is of interest here to note that Captain Matthew Flinders,³ as far back as 1803, made a similar observation on the mainland opposite. He saw a girl at Caledon Bay who "wore a small piece of bark, in guise of a fig leaf, which was the sole approximation to clothing seen."

¹ Vide also *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxi, 1907, p. 10.

² Cf. J. MacGillivray, *Narrative Voyage H.M.S. "Rattlesnake"*, p. 14.

³ *A Voyage to Terra Australia*, London, 1814, vol. ii, p. 212.

NOTES ON THE
Natives of Bathurst Island, North Australia.

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demands it; but usually, when on a simple turtle or dugong hunting expedition, 501
two persons only occupy places in the craft, one near the bow and another near
the stern (*vide* Plate X, Figs. 1 and 2). The boatmen, while propelling the 516
craft, squat with their buttocks resting upon the heels and with their knees pressed
against the sides. The weight of their body being thus well within the boat, its
stability is thereby considerably increased.

Paddles.—Propulsion is effected by means of paddles which are made of hard 501
wood. They have a single well-shaped blade and a rounded handle (*vide* Plate
XII, Fig. 2). The edges of the blade are parallel or taper slightly towards the end,
which is square or rounded. Apart from the marks left by the tomahawk used in 531
its making, the implement is without ornamentation. In one case only, a circular
collar was carved around the handle, immediately above the sloping shoulder of the
blade. The longest paddle noted measured 167 centimetres in length, its blade
80; the shortest was 115 centimetres in length and its blade 45. The width
of the blades ranges from 7 to 9 centimetres. Both hands clasp the paddle,
which is dipped alternately on one side or the other as the occasion and the steering
require it.

Balers.—Water that accumulates in the canoe, either by leakage or overwash 415
in a rough sea, is removed by means of a baler, which is made out of the melon 824
shell (*Melo diadema*). The columella of the shell is carefully cut away, leaving
only the large body-whorl, which is used as a scoop (*vide* Plate XI, Figs. 3 and 4).
The outer surface of the shell is painted with red and yellow ochre in large cross 531
pattern, with a fine cross shading.

Dug-outs.—The dug-out canoes to which I have elsewhere referred¹ have, in 175
all probability, been introduced by Malays from whom the natives obtain them by
barter. Dr. Walter Roth has also proved that the dug-outs met with along the coast of
Queensland are of Papuan origin. The form observed in Apeley Strait is without
outrigger and hollowed out of a single tree trunk. The bow and stern are raised
(*vide* Plate X, Fig. 2).

Corroborees.

As with all primitive folk, song and dance constitute the ultimate stage of 535
any social intercourse or festivity. The islanders are even more ready than the 527
brothers on the mainland to resort to this means of entertainment. It thus
happened that, wherever we came into contact with the blacks and presented them
with divers small articles, a corroboree was immediately inaugurated; even though
the encounter happened to occur in the middle of the day. Corroborees on the

¹ *Cf. Narrative Voyage H.M.S. "Rattlesnake,"* vol. ii, p. 17: "the baler (a melon shell) is in constant requisition."

² *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia,* vol. xxi, 1907, p. 53. Among others, note that Major Campbell says of the Port Essington natives that "such of the canoes as I saw were hollowed from the trunks of trees, like those of the Malays and were probably either left by these people or stolen from them," *Proc. Roy. Geog. Soc.,* London, vol. iv, 1834, p. 170.

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HOT EARTH over baked *Kulama* yams is removed. Yams that are to be eaten at end of ritual must be resoaked in water.



[824]

SOME COOKED YAMS are cut, peeled, and mashed. Water and paint are then added. Yams are always handled with respect.



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MEN RUB MASH on bodies to insure health, then do so to the uninitiated young, whose health is paternal responsibility.

[P. 16, (A)]

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Figs. 5 and 6. Probing in the sand at the head of turtle tracks sometimes locates a nest of eggs



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Fig. 10. Skinning a large crocodile

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pieces of the white meat were carried into the camp to be roasted for dinner. What was not to be consumed that night was thrown into the water, for meat spoils quickly in this sticky climate.

Darkness came early, and with it came the return of the goose hunters and the departure of the launch with the Grimsters and their crocodile team. Once more they would spend the night hunting crocodiles, this time downstream on their way back to the settlement. Soon many little fires broke up the darkness of the clearing and the smell of fresh roasting meat wafted over to where Albert, Agnes, Jack, and I were opening cans of corned beef. "Tomorrow we go bush," Albert remarked and I heartily assented.

Young Brook, a lean young man, and his wife, Alice,



Fig. 11. Even the youngest respect the teeth of the crocodile

approached our fire. "You savey goose?" he asked me. "Oh yes," I said, "we eat him along America." He handed me a large juicy leg which I gave to Albert to divide, then squatted down at the edge of the fire's glow. I handed my tin of tobacco to Alice and she filled her husband's pipe. Picking up a burning branch from the fire, she knocked a hot coal into the bowl of the pipe and began smoking. Soon she handed it to Young Brook. Suddenly our attention was directed to the opposite side of the clearing where Dennis, the four-year old daughter of Black Joe was crying hysterically. Tuki, a tall powerful man of fifty-five, was doing his best to calm her and disentangle himself from her clinging arms so that he could leave. Tuki and his wife, Fat Alice, were a childless couple and

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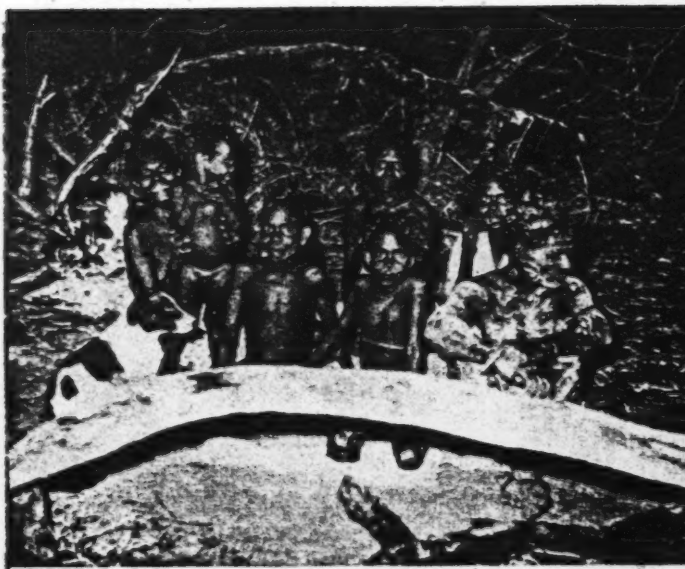


Fig. 12. A Tiwi family camped for the night

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Black Joe, Fat Alice's brother, had given them his eldest in adoption. However, Dennis spent as much time with his parents as with her foster parents and it was quite evident affection was at least equally divided. Albert went over and to bring the screaming, kicking child back to our camp and to give her some of the hard candy which I had brought with me some time, however, before her attention was sufficiently attracted to allow Tuki and the other men to slip away into the bush to hunt crocodiles for another night. Agnes commented to him cry? That white man rule no good. By and by they

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We strolled back to Black Joe's camp with Dennis, and to a discussion concerning the superiority of crocodile hunting

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Fig. 14. "Cooking milingani"

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[322]
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do you cook the sticks?" I asked. "To make them dry so they won't slip in our hands," they replied.

Once the sticks were all well charred on the ends the men took them down to the canoe. For once, I used my status of ethnographer and overruled my role of a woman, and accompanied the men on what was properly men's business. The presence of women or children might bring bad luck. Whether the explanation was simply that women and children are considered to be lacking in the amount of silence or immobility required, or whether the reason was more subtle, I never found out. "This properly men's business," was the only explanation.

We took the canoe a quarter of a mile up stream, where we

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Fig. 17. "Hunting a possum"

It was soon overtaken by Albert who killed it quickly with a blow from a stick. As he brought it back he said, "Him big mother. See him pickaninni." And he held up a hairless baby barely three inches long, its eyes still closed, but very much alive. "Oh, kill it quick, Albert," I begged. He shook his head, "I can't kill him, I too sorry alonga him." Here we were at an impasse, two people too sorry alonga him; one too sorry to kill it, and one too sorry to let it live. Who was right?

Meanwhile, Agnes took the mother possum and pulled the fur from a small area on the belly and then slitting the skin with the sharp end of a broken stick, she withdrew the gall bladder and intestines. "Him make him bad," she explained. We did not stop to cook the animal, but continued our search. This area had all been burned by the previous parties and already little delicate shoots of grass were poking up through the black ground.

During the next hour we wandered slowly through the bush and, although we saw many trees which had been inhabited by possums, they were now empty. One that looked most likely was hollow and Albert hopefully built a fire in the rotten base, then sat back and waited for the smoke to drive the animal out. After half an hour, it was quite obvious that no one was at home.

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481 Then our luck turned. This time, when Albert gave the "come here" call, it was because he had located a wild honey nest, or "sugar-bag," high in a large stringy-bark eucalyptus. There was little point in cutting this large tree down so Albert prepared to climb. First he cut a small sapling and laid it at a 45-degree angle against a crotch where the massive trunk split in two. Then, grip-

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One man will then take a step or two forward, hold up a hand, and stamp vigorously, and all the warriors of his side will copy his actions. "Let 'em all come!" is the attitude adopted. If the enemy does not start hostilities at once, they throw their spears down and jump about like wallabies to show their contempt for the slaggard's markmanship. They are, however, careful not to get too far away from their own weapons, on which they pounce immediately the first spear is hurled by their opponents. The air is soon thick with flying spears and war-clubs, and the exchange goes on until some unlucky warrior is really hurt, when the engagement ceases.

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BOTH sides gather round, howling their dismay, until repairs to the injured have been effected. A red-dyed ball of goose-down, which is hung from the neck by a string woven of human hair, is held before the mouth as a charm to divert the missiles, but the warriors owe their immunity from death or serious injury to their own remarkable eyesight and to the dexterity with which they evade, or turn to one side, the hurtling weapons of the enemy. The war-clubs used by the islanders are far more difficult to dodge than the spears, which come straight at you.

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A BATHURST ISLANDER BRANDISHES HIS CLUB.

The war-club is merely a short, bent stick with a knob at one end; but, spinning in the air like a boomerang, it can be thrown for amazing distances by the islanders, considerably over a hundred yards, and not far off two hundred. This weapon is not thrown straight at an opponent, but at a stone, or a tuft of

[P. 17(A)]

797 ters, supervising the lubras' work and ordering stores, which are brought from Darwin by the mission's own lugger *St. Francis*. The pleasant lunch we had at the refectory, where wide windows, open all round, admitted every wandering breeze, was due to their efforts, and later I was to see something of the results of their teaching.

797 School, both for boys and for girls, takes up only two and a half hours each day, but the pupils learn quickly, and the more they are taught the more they can absorb. Reading and writing are mastered without any more difficulty than in the case of white children of the same age, though the pupils were very shy and almost inaudible when exhibiting their prowess. Arithmetic they do not take to so kindly, unless they happen to be interested by some problem that has a definitely practical application to their own lives; but drawing comes natural to the islanders, as it does to the blacks of the mainland, where I had already seen very spirited sketches made by aboriginal children. Of the affection of the children, both for the sisters and the mission fathers, there was no doubt. To be as close to them as possible was an honour they were all bent on securing.

797 THE "blackies," as they call the girls, range in age from tiny tots to those who are practically young women. They were 562 all much excited by the novelty of our visit, bubbling over with laughter, whispering and giggling together. The older "blackies" eye a visitor cooly, smiling over their shoulders with a flash of white teeth; and, when the pilot and I came along with one of the sisters to hear them sing the "Magnificat" and "Adeste Fideles," they fled shrieking, only to turn round and giggle again when they thought that they were far enough away.

"No more gammon!" called the sister, and they lined up demurely to sing their hymns, right tunelessly, with spasms of giggles in the intervals. To hold up a finger is quite sufficient to bring shrieks of delight from these childish, happy creatures. "Georgie," a very little boy with a very big tummy, so young that he was not yet at the boys' school, sang "Georgie Porgie, pudding pie, kissed the girls and made them cry" with much aplomb and gesture. If Georgie was at the girls' school, he did not forget that he was a man. He spoke man's language, not woman's talk such as women by custom must use on Bathurst Island, and he sat down like a man with knees wide apart, not together as a woman must.

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535 Then, while the older "blackies" formed a circle, chanting in 562 their own language and clapping their hands in time, little girls, two by two, performed women's dances, which again differ from those of the men. There were buffalo, bullock, and lugger dances, when they imitated the animals with arms widespread or bent slightly at the elbows to represent the horns, or held at angles such as those at which sails are set on a lugger, while, now and then, two little fists beaten together faithfully copied the "put-put" of Diesel engines.

More ambitious and complicated was the dance of the overseas mail plane that flies from Singapore to Darwin, when whirling arms represented the propellers and stamping feet the beat of the engines. There is, by the way, a sacred language used for songs, and it is only in this language that the name of the dead can be mentioned. If by chance anyone should mention a dead man's name in the ordinary language, every one within hearing will spit with vigour. If defamatory, the maker of such a faux pas will be hit about the head.

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